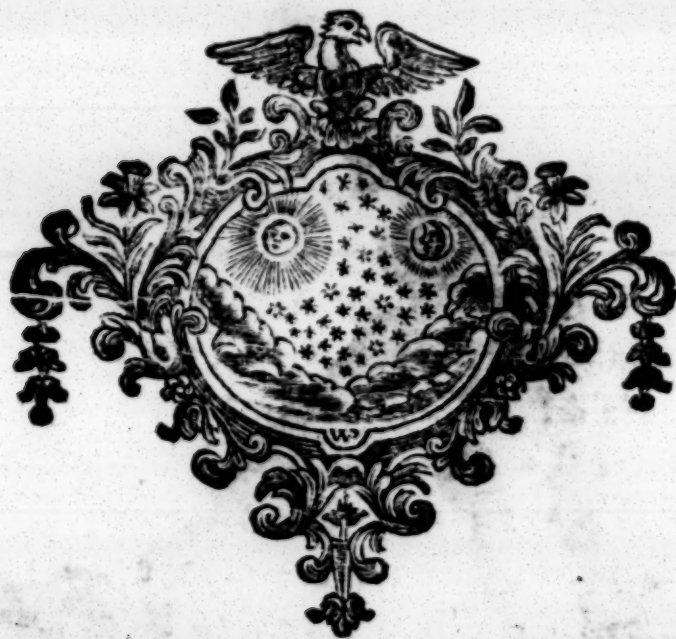


T H E
Polite Assembly
O R, T H E
Charms of Solitude
Display'd.

By JOHN MAXWELL,
Being Blind.



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THUS waking from this Lethargy of of Life, amidst such solemn Silence and Retirement, both which invite me now to sweet Reflection ; having given Laud to Him, who gave us Being, and crav'd Protection for this present Day ; I will indulge myself in Contemplation. This humble Lodging's Neatness is enough to satisfy the Need of simple Nature in its Repose, whose little Lattice is so artfully contrived with curious Chinks, which gracefully convey such pleasing Fragrance in this warm Season, distilling from Variety of Flowers, which so luxuriant grow, they shade the Day, and seem as if they did rejoice to pay most liberally the Hand that so disposed them. These, joined with the grey Morn, do all combine to vary now the Terror of Night's Shade, which hovers still around, and seems as it loth to quit the World, and give the Sun its Place. Then let my Thought fix on the melancholy Scene of Sleep, view it as in a Glass most curiously, and stand amazed to see its secret Workings. I think, amongst all the various Readings I have found, none pretend to give us a Description how it is effected Sadly, indeed, it looks ; and, when no Dream is found, it is Darkness, great



great as Midnight, or the Grave ; and is, I think, but little less than Death. Here is an Object near. My sleeping Friend, whom much I love for his good Sense, yet more for his good Will, in making that good Sense always conducive to benefit Mankind : I grasp his Hand. Alas ! he knows it not, no more than if I now did take my Leave of him, if wrapp'd within his winding Sheet, or in his Coffin. He lies bereft of every thing that is rational. This is a State of Danger, did not the Care of Providence protect us. The Villain, now, might enter, and lift his pointed Dagger to his Bosom ! He is regardless as a new-born Infant, and more 'lost to Sense. Shou'd not such Reflection make us careful to pray to the Almighty for the Care of Angels, to hover near our Slumbers. But let me turn the Perspective-Glass, which shews us *Sleep* in such Deformity, and so dress'd in Terror ; and let me see what are the Benefits which from it accrue. It is no mean Blessing ; and the wise Disposer of all Things has, to this great Preservative of Life, annexed a Pleasure, not, I think, inferiour to that of daily Food ; without which, we know, the World could not subsist. Then if in some sort it is called a Tyrant ; it is certainly the kindest in the World : It courts us like our Love ; and, by its kind Caresses, still approaching, still grows more pleasing ; 'till, like Enchantments, such as Poets feign, we are subdued. But when we are made its Captives,

we

We never know the *Crisis* of its Power. It still
 conceals from us the Lots of Liberty ; nay, if we
 dream, we never understand we are held in
 Chains : And thus is all its Happiness conveyed ;
 without which, Life would be a Burden. Such
 is our Make and Frame, we stand in need of fre-
 quent Periods from the World's Business. Then
 these are all pleasing Sensations ; Truces as it
 were we hold with Life in all its Cares and Sor-
 rows ; nay, even our very Pleasures stand in need
 of such Refreshment, to invigorate our Spirits to
 relish its Delights : How much more than those,
 whose Lot and destin'd Task to toil all Day ;
 who by their Sweat do purchase a scanty Por-
 tion, when compared with some, for their Sup-
 port ; whose greatest Labour is to supply the
 Rich with all those Delicacies the World affords,
 such, as one observes, *who live like Gods indeed,
 to die like Men.* And O what Sadness does Ex-
 perience bring, when we observe how oft these
 mighty Blessings are made the Instruments of Sin !
 This will not move our Envy sure, but Pity ;
 when we reflect how their Account will stand !
 Much more I might enumerate concerning *Sleep* ;
 how in the Midst of all those various Ills that
 afflict Mankind in Courts, in Palaces, and lowliest
 Cottage ; by Pain, by Sickness, and by Loss
 of Friends ; by great Perplexities, and anxious
 Cares how to provide for a lov'd Offspring, or a
 numerous Issue, whose Wants be sure are always
 present with a kind Parent ; and sometime
 great

greater Sorrows mixed : With those, perhaps the Loss of a beloved Wife, or darling Child, a widow'd Daughter's Fatherless, will all by Turns step in to disturb our Peace : And all these are reliev'd by this same *Sleep*, that sovereign universal Medicine, so liberally dispenced to all, that none need want ; but all may take enough. Such is the Bounty of our benign Creator, in easing all these Sufferings incident to Man, which he by sad Experience has found he is made obnoxious to, since our first Parent's Fall. But let me not omit a Circumstance relating to it. After we have been held so long a Time, and as it were buried within a Grave ; how in an Instant, e'er a Thought can pass, we are set free ; and that so pleasingly, and in such gentle sort, as if we were awaked by Touch of Angels. May not this be a Resemblance of our awaking from the *Sleep of Death*, when that great Day shall come, when all our scatter'd Atoms shall be collected, and when the Soul and Body re-unites ; when lofty Pyramids and Marble Towers, provided by the Great for their Security even in Death, shall be dissolved ; and when, in the short Space of an Eye's Wink, we all shall wake to endless Happiness, or Misery. But my Friend awakes. — Good Morrow, Sir : May good Health attend you ! The Morning rises sweetly, and seems to promise us a pleasing Day. Then let us dress ; and, when we have offered up a Morning's Sacrifice, we will participate of all these Charms which

which stand exhibited in this fair Prospect. — This pleasing unknown Solitude around, of which as yet we have but had a superficial View, being interrupted by the last Night's Rain. — Those friendly Drops, you mention'd, much conduced to further my Repose : I think I never passed a Night so pleasingly, hearing the soft descending Showers fall amongst the Trees ; and which were sometimes borne by gentle Winds, in softest Murmurs, causing them to beat against the Lattice, scoth'd me more than Musick ; and, at that Juncture, more secured my Rest. Ah ! that our Enterance into the *Sleep of Death* might be but as tranquil ! The Thought would much alleviate the Pain of Thinking, which timorous Apprehensions will produce. But see where our good Host is coming towards us. Let's meet him now, and try to make him sensible how much a generous Heart can be affected with Goodness such as his. His venerable Aspect pleas'd me much, and musters in my Mind Ideas that delight me. Methinks I see the patriarchal Age arise before me, dress'd in all its pleasing rural Scenes ; and he, I fancy, looks like *Abraham's* Servant, when employ'd to fetch a Wife for his be'oved Son. Oh, Sir, may all that tenderest Sentiments, flowing from grateful Hearts susceptible as ours, be doubly shower'd upon you. We stand much bound for this your late humane and charitable Behaviour ; which was done in Circumstances
that

that can never fail to enhance the Benefit, and which persuades us you have not always lived such a Recluse. — You err not in your Judgment : The Time has been when this sweet Solitude was only irksome ; when nothing but a wild fantastick Round of Vanities wou'd please those Opposites to Virtue, which only serve to enervate the Mind, and plunge it into *Lethe*, fabled by the Ancients ; for these may as effectually produce *total Forgetfulness* of aught that's good. How do we see it verified in thousands, whose Days are all consumed in every Vanity the World is fond of. Such was my Danger, 'till a Friend in secret pitied my sad Condition, and relieved me. Her Name is *Affliction* ; which, when well received, may properly be called the *Nurse of Virtue*. She sent a Relative of her's called *Poverty* ; who, by her wise Remonstrances, blew up some little Sparks of *Virtue* ; which, as an *Embryo*, long had laid conceal'd, and well nigh smothered in my Bosom. At first I thought her Discipline severe ; but, by degrees, the Rigour of it softened, and I beheld her as a tender Parent, who tries all Means how to preserve its Child ; who sometimes steels his Soul even against Nature, lest, by listening to its fond Desires, he should be instrumental to its Ruin. Not that Affliction always will secure those Benefits I hint at : No, we know, there are many born, and bred within its Neighbourhood, that never profit by it : But sure a more melancholy Scene is not in Nature, than when we see Misery and Sin go hand in hand together ! No Comfort here, nor any Hope here-
after ;

after ! But t'is is a Digression from my Story. Well then, I will tell you of the first Benefit given by Affliction : I was made acquainted how to to unloose those Bands, which bind the Thought more sure than those of Steel affect the Body. This being done, a certain Door flew open, which gave me Enterance into a spacious Field. The Way was rough, because to seldom trod ; but still I made a shift to journey on, 'till at the last I came to a magnificent but antique Building, where *Consolation* dwells. She taught me all her Lessons, and disposed me for Instruction. My Money being gone, my Friends forsook me, Temptation vanished ; and I now had Leisure for Reflection. I now beheld the Sun, the Moon, and Stars, and all that sweet Variety in Nature, with Rapture and Devotion. These led me to examine and search out the Certainty of all those sacred Truths these Miracles confirm. I now consider'd for what End I was born, how great the Dignity of Human Nature, and how happy in those gracious Promises made to Obedience : All which depends on our Conformity to *Virtue's Rules*. This you will say was a prodigious Largeſs from *Affliction* ; and tho' she sent Poverty so dress'd in Clouds, these Thoughts dispers'd them ; and now, as by the Help of Exhalations in the Night, I clearly saw how many and how great are the Advantages which she bestows : For, sure, to be acquainted with such Things, furthers us much in our Pursuit after an
Hereafter ;

Hereafter ; and helps to qualify us for its Joys. I have heard it said, *A vicious Soul must needs be miserable, even in the Midst of Heaven, being void of any Relish for such Happiness* : Except we shall suppose it will be changed ; and then it wou'd be another : So wou'd destroy the Freedom of our Choice, when nothing less we reasonably can suppose will please so powerful and wise a Being. But, Oh ! how happy is he who suffers by Affliction ; not for Correction, but Reasons wise and hid. But still you will say, I wander from my Purpose ; my Intention being to describe my self. Well then, I was set free from all those great Anxieties, inseparable to the Rich, how to increase and to preserve their Wealth. I fear'd no Robbers, nor any Revolution in the State, to hurt my Fortune ; nay, I feared not Death coming to me in such a dreadful Shape, as oft we may observe it does to many ; Life being so precarious, that in every Stage, even in the Midst of Youth, how many do we daily see removed from out the Midst of all those various Pleasures Affluence bestows ; nay, I was free from dismal Apprehension of what might happen after it concerning what so much concerns all those who do possess abundance. Not that this Thought can be of any Comfort to a virtuous Mind, to want the Opportunity of doing Good ; but to be free from Danger must be pleasing ; and here we are abundantly provided

for by what we are told ; and he is poor indeed, who has not the small Value of one Farthing to bestow ; which, when the Will is right, we know how it is received ; and that its Price is valued more than Gold. This was my Situation, 'till that Lady, which you desire so much to be acquainted with, alter'd my State, and once more made me rich, according to the Opinion of a pious Author, who will have all included in that Character, concerning giving, who has something to spare. But let me now intreat you to taste a small Repast I have prepared, and then I will conduct you in your Journey towards her House : She is already acquainted with your intended Visit ; and will, I am sure, be equally as pleased to join in Conversation, such as your's ; for she is, indeed, a wise and gracious Lady ; her Character occasions to occur fresh in my Memory some beauteous Lines of an ingenious Author, I have read. Part of them will be *apropos* to what we have discoursed ; and may the last, which must be understood in general speaking, be verified in her. The Lines are these :

*The wise o'er-ruling Author of our Beings
Deals with his Creature, Man, in various Ways.
Gracious and Good in All : Some feel the Rod,
And own, like us, the Father's chast'ning Hand.
Sev'n times, like Gold, they pass the purging Flame,
And are at length refin'd ;
Whilst, gently, some tread o'er the Path of Life,
With*

With Honour, Health; with Friends and Plenty

[blest,

Their Years roll round in Innocence and Ease.

Hoary at last, and in a good old Age,

They go, declining, to the Grave in Peace;

And change their Pleasures here for Joys above.

Your Lines are admirable, and as well adapted. But Characters your last Description paints I fear are few. They must, indeed, be Minds rarely endowed, who steer amidst such a Variety with Steadiness and Safety :

Whose Years roll round in Innocence and Ease;

Who change their Pleasures here for Joys above.

What must we then infer from the Word *Innocence* more than a bare Exemption from gross and flagrant Crimes ? Or from that Loss of Time, we have complain'd of ? Much Guilt may be contracted by Omissions ; and they who are born to Affluence shou'd remember, tho' they are freed from Servitude and Labour, they are not to be idle. They have their Task assign'd them ; and much will be required from such Abilities. But what I think will chiefly crown their Hopes, is the Remembrance of having given abundantly, and enough : Then, indeed, the Circumstances of our Greatness here may in some sort attend us hereafter, by being a Means of filling us with Joy and Thankfulness to Heaven, for having given so great Opportunity by which we meet Reward. But if we have failed, then they are Aggravations of our Guilt, and sink

us lower into Misery for having so transgressed, and by our sad Example drawn in many to Destruction. O! that all in Power would thus reflect, and by it profit so as to live well; happy indeed it would be for the World. — Your wife Observances have in some sort drawn out a List of this rare Person's Virtues: I'll take it from you and enlarge upon it. Now as we pass along this rising Ground, which way I chuse to lead you, knowing to you such Scenes are always pleasing; it is not the high Road leading to her House; but made on purpose for her own Retirement, the which she our defends to make me happy. My generous Benefactress, and my Friend, whose Bounty, and whose Wisdom do at once sustain my Body, and refresh my Mind! Then, as we pass along, I will point you out each Beauty of this Solitude; observe the friendly Cover of these Shade, a cool Retreat made from the Noon-Day Sun; see all these beauteous Hills that are so adorned with flowering Shrubs affording us a Wilder-ness of Sweets! Mark all these Springs, those Trees, those Flowers; and Birds, whose Harmony so much delight the Ear; and then reflect what an Expence is here! Not, sure, to be condemned, but much applauded. It is Money saved from every fashionable Folly of the Age; and here laid out to display the Works of Nature, in such a sweet Variety, as leads us to exalt the Author's Praise: And then the Charities, which

which from it flow! The Channells of those Springs,
 which you beheld so artfully contrived to run
 in curious Windings round these Grounds, by
 their Descent do water and refresh those Plains we
 have left below, which before were apt to be an-
 noyed in Times of Drouth: And then the yearly
 Dressing of those Trees is of great benefit to
 all the poor Inhabitants around, because in
 Winter Fuel here is scarce. But these are
 only Parts of what have been dispensed by this
 fair Work. How many Families have been, and
 are, sustained by being here employed! A no-
 ble Charity, that does relieve the Wants of the
 Indigent, and prevents those Crimes which of-
 ten spring from Idleness and Sloth. That pa-
 sturing Ground, you have on your right Hand,
 is stock'd with sheep. There several shepherds
 and their Families do dwell in Tents. The
 Prospects are delightful, pleasing all as the *Ar-
 cadian* Scenes; but bless'd with Innocence and
 Piety. Here she often visits; and while the
 Summer lasts, she monthly holds a Feast,
 with which she entertains this rural Family;
 which Feast doth never fail of being sanctified
 by the Priest's Benediction; one whom much she
 honours and esteems; and sure his Worth
 deserves it: For indeed he always preaches
 well, by living well. This All might do;
 and wou'd they all do so, it would much
 conduce to the World's Retormation. But this
 good Man, was you acquainted with him, you
 wou'd confess he is a living Mirror, reflecting

ing on us every Christian Virtue. Such is his Piety, Humility, and universal Charity, which shine, conspicuous in him, they render him a Pattern for Posterity. Then add to these such an extensive and superiour Knowledge, both by Capacity and Depth of Learning, which sets him up so much above the common Rate, just as we reckon Angels are to Men; whom he resembles too, in his Obedience so far as this frail State can be allowed, having never fallen by any gross Transgression, so that he shines just like a Star of the first Magnitude. I will close his Character by reading you a Line or two I have here in my Pocket; a Transcript from a Letter written by a Gentleman concerning his Minority; one who recommended him to this Lady's Favour. His Words are these.

Oh! had you been acquainted with his early
Gonance;

Seen the sweet Blossoms of his Childhood grow;
You wou'd be lavish in the fair Description.

Befriended first by Nature, in a sweet
And gentle Disposition, forward to receive
Instruction, and to practice all Virtue's
Strictest rules, which render him compleat
The Gentleman and Christian.

That Satisfaction which appears in you by this Relation, which you just have made, gives me at once a Pleasure and Concern. I joy to hear your Delicacy of Thought; but grieve when I reflect on the World's Baseness, which takes a Pleasure in ridiculing Priests;

a Vice springing from Ignorance and Prejudice ; but more from a Despatch to Holy Things. Distinctions in the World are necessary for its Well-being ; and we are commanded to obey its Order, by rendering Respect where it is due. But Honours and Distinctions, such as those, have all arisen, and been conferr'd by Men, just as Interest or Humour serves ; but Honour due to Priesthood is derived from Heaven, as is its Power ; a Power the greatest Monarch stands in Need of ; a Power we no where find has been dispensed to Angels. An Angel was sent forth to give Command to call for *Peter* ; but not allowed to exercise his Office. Then, if some of their *Lives* are not agreeable to such a sacred Function ; yet, while they stand invest'd with Authority proceeding from their Order, they have it in their Power to help us much. Consider them then as Channels by which Heaven does convey its Blessings to us. Then, when no better Opportunity is found for Holiness, is much to be desired ; let us take Care that our *Lives* be right ; and then we may be sure that Heaven will ratify what they pronounce. Another Observation may be made, perhaps not often thought of, redounding to their Honour. They are a sure Proof of what the World has for so many Ages labour'd to defend, for which such multitudes have laid down *Life* : I mean the Certainty of Christianity ; whose Beginning, we are told, was weak, and low, quite destitute of any human Interest :

Interest : The *Jews*, its Opposites, they wou'd not help them ; the Heathen World, its fiercest Persecutors ! What Power was it then that they did find to aid their Fraud, and give them a Beginning ? And that so artfully, that no one could e'er perceive it ? but this is more a surd. Then, when you see a Priest, you may be sure you see a living Proof of what we are told, and for that Cause respect him. — I have listen'd with Delight to your last Topick. So closely has my Attention been engag'd, I was well nigh leading you out of the Way. This is the Entrance to her lovely Gardens. Observe it well. To me these beauteous Arches, so adorn'd with Honey-Suckles, are far more pleasing than the grandest Porticoes : And so this lofty well-form'd Poplar shade, where *Philomel* at Midnight sings her Song, gives me at once a seriousness and Joy. Yonder she walks, and with her good *Artasia*, whose Story entertain'd you so last Night. — Ladies, your Servant.

Thus far we may venture to be conformable to the World's Breeding : The Civility is religious, when the Intention is right ; but for the rest of all its modish Manners, that is so well known, by what we call fine Things, that mean just nothing ; which, when examin'd by the Eye of Truth, appear a Mockery ; Characters like your's will look on with Disdain. But give us Leave to express our Admiration of these fair Gardens, which appear so shining !

They

They help Imagination to furnish out Ideas in the Fancy concerning Worlds unknown, & tho' we had reach'd the Confines of the Moon. Those planetary Worlds, the Learned talk of ; high, beside their Speculations, Reason tells us, is most highly probable. Then if such Worlds there are, they sure must be inhabited by Creatures that are more excellent than we : whose Accommodations and whole Happiness rises still higher than any here we know. — Indeed we are all beholden to this your kind Conductor, who hath taken Pains to make us thus acquainted e'er we cou'd have the Happiness of an Interview : Such is his Goodness, his benevolent Spirit I know he joys to be the Instrument of promoting mutual Happiness in All ; an Office, which, indeed, becomes an Angel. Then, Sirs, you are most welcome. I speak for my *Arpasia*, and my self. It glads us, indeed it glads us much to find, that you, who are possess'd of such Prosperity, can so fitly slight the World, to sojourn here ; a Choice indeed, most worthy ! But do not think us vain, or ostentatious, in being fond of this our own Opinion : The Pleasure we express flows from a different Source. It is Thankfulness ; it is Gratitude to Heaven. Self-Praise, we know, is nauseous, and to be avoided. But Cases may arise, in which Things will be spoken, which seem to have a Tendency that Way : As when we want to do ourselves a Justice ; that, sure, is always lawful :

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Much

Much more, then, when it is in Heaven's Cause. So that when all is said that can be thought of, something will still remain, something within us which we call *Self-Consciousness*, separate from that Vice; without which, how shou'd we e'er be capable either of judging or of acting right? Permit me then to recommend *Retirement*, both as the pleasantest and safest State. Those vernal Scenes, of which we are so fond, were made an Entertainment and Employment for our first Parents in their State of Innocence. Here every Flower, the which we so admire in lively Characters, we plainly see Marks of the divine Power and Wisdom. Thus by pleasing Steps we rise yet higher to contemplate the Heavens, which fills us with Desires to behold and to enjoy Myriads of Worlds, beside those you have mention'd; which some, perhaps, will say is but conjectural. But, surely, such Conjectures do agree with Reason: Else what is all that Multitude of Stars, which we see ever burn? Whole amazing Heights speak them so many Suns, which enlighten Worlds, that are out of our Ken; and it is, I think, a Weakness to suppose, that such stupendous Bodies should be created for no higher Purpose, than to appear to us as twinkling Sparks. But let us step into this cool Grotto, to avoid these Heat Drops. Here is a rural Feast to entertain you. We will do our best to pleasure you to Day: It is our Duty and our Happiness. Those Lines, you have fix'd your Eye on, we have lately

lately met with from a wise Author ; and they are set to Musick. The Notes are dying ; and often sooth my dear *Arpasia's* Sorrows. This Organ does, I think, become the Grot ; whose Echo is surprizing, and helps the Musick much. I'll touch the Keys, while my *Arpasia* sings.

*It must be done, my Soul ! yet 'tis a strange,
A dismal and mysterious Change,
When thou shalt leave this Tenement of Clay,
And to an unknown somewhere wing thy Way ;
When TIME shall be ETERNITY, and Thou
Shall be thou knows not WHAT, and live thou
[knows not HOW !*

The Words, indeed, are serious ; and the Sounds most pleasing. Next to the Pleasures which a Garden yields, Musick has Charms which gives us much Delight. A Garden feasts the Eye with various Beauties ; Musick regales the Ear with Sounds most sweet ; which, when rightly used, is fit for Relaxation ; and has Power to lift the Mind to Heaven. The Devil hates it ; and was forced to fly from out the Breast of *Israel's* Monarch, when the gentle Youth did so harmoniously touch o'er the Strings. So thote Kings, with all their mighty Armies, when in Pursuit of War, finding themselves distrets'd, they sought a Prophet ; but he wou'd not speak, 'till Musick came. when, during the Performance, he declared their wonderful Deliverance by those miraculous Waters which began to move to fill their Trenches, and relieve their Thirst ; and was a Means of furthering their

Conquest. This makes me pity all those untuned Bodies, made dull by Prejudice of Education : For Souls, they say, are equal, who censure and condemn as Wickedness our Practice of it in the Church ; which is, I think, no less than Blasphemy, if we believe all that the Royal Psalmist has recorded. To such I wou'd recommend a careful Reading of what we find delivered in the sacred Text, where we are commanded to take Care how we hear : For it they can be so infatuated, so blind to sacred Truths ; how may they be deceived ? And some, we know, there have been, who have died for Error. — Here is another Piece of Furniture becomes the Grotto well. This Clock, I pray you now examine it with Care ; for it is made by such peculiar Art, that Money shou'd not purchase it of me. He we oft retire to hear it strike ; for every Stroke produces Seriousness ; and the last Knell is sure to proclaim the Hour seal'd up, and never shall return ! Observe its *Minutes*, and its *seconds* too ; how they are contrived, embellished, and adorn'd with curious Characters ! Which clearly show the Danger of a too eager Pursuit for Pleasure. Here you plainly see, that all those haughty Tyrants in the World, with all their Blood-shed, Rapine, and every black enormous Crime committed, cou'd boast no higher Purchase for their Wickedness, than a short Space in Time, which these little Movings easily can count. Gladly I wou'd have recommended this famous Artist to my Acquaintance

quaintance in the Town; but was repulsed. They told me, he would meet with no Encouragement; that all declaim'd against him. Some of the Ladies shriek'd when it was first propos'd, and cried, *what shall become of all our Routs and Hurricanes. those dear Delights, which serve to entertain us on that Day, when publick Laws prohibit other Pleasures?* Another said, *Inceed, it would be fine, was such a bold Intruder entertain'd. What* (went she on) *when we are ready dress'd, and Spirits flow; our Joys must all be damp't by his Machinery!* So that he must content himself to work for some sober Families here in the Country: Which will not be enough, I am afraid, to afford him proper Maintenance, much less reward such Merit. But here is a Scene. I see you have found it out, might check, I think, the most Licentious, when in their full Career, and make them give a Truce to all their wild Extravagancies, to pause a while, and gaze upon the Sight. These Skulls, no Sepulchre, I will assure you, has been rifled for them, for that is inhuman. I rescued them from Rabble and Dilgrace; being scattered by some careless Hands, which were employed to dig about that Place; which once was the common Receptacle for Dead of all Distinctions in that calamitous Time of the last great Plague; and here I have deposited them more safe than in a Grave, judging such Objects fit for Meditation. Most fit indeed. Who knows but this was once the Frontispiece of some fine Lady? Where,

now,

now, are all her Charms, her Hours of Jollity, when Mirth sat smiling on her Brow, and wanton Pleasures sparkled in her Eyes ? Alas ! the Flesh is wasted, and those Eyes are lost ; and nothing now remains, but ghastly Sockets. O rueful Sight ! Where, now, are all her Slaves that used to watch her Nod ? Not one in waiting, not one to wipe away the Damp and Rust that eat into the Bone, making it fall in Particles, to mix with common Earth. This, perhaps, has been the Cabinet of some rich Miser's Brain, which ever was so anxiously employed in amassing Wealth ? Where are his loaded Coffers ? Riddled all ! and *He* is regardless. This is strange, since we have Laws in being, why are they not then put in Execution, to recover all his Treasure ? Which, if he had pleased, would have enriched his Soul, and made it shine more splendid than all that costly Ore ; the *Rust of which*, he had been often told, *wou'd eat his Flesh*. Here, indeed, is Room for much Reflection : So much, that I cou'd wish the SUN did shine an Hour longer. But, by the Shadows of yon Passengers, I do perceive it scarce will serve to light us on our Journey. But be that as it may, another Consideration still remains, tho' it detains us 'till the Stars appear. MAN is the fairest, noblest Part of all Heav'n's Works, visible here below : But view him in that Light the *Atheist* sh ws him, and sure he is the miserablest of all Creatures, even by being capable
of

of such Enjoyments, in which they will have no bounds. This makes 'em so industrious to deny the SOUL is immortal, which renders them more wretched than the Brutes : For they, we know, are free from any Trouble caused by Reflection. But Man, however sunk in Sensuality, at every sober Interval, must endure the Sting of Remembrance concerning *Dissolution* ; which, at the longest Period, is so short. But O how few are there attain to that, the Generality ? Yet how much shorter, besides our Knowledge of sudden Death, to which each Moment we are liable, and which has for some Yea's been, and I think still is more than common. I wish it was more consider'd. It was a Custom once to toll a Bell, during the last Moments of each upon their Sick-Bed, to give good Christians Notice to put up Petitions for a departing Soul. I wonder that the *Atheists* have not such a Custom at the Approach of Death, to give their wild Companions in Licentiousness Notice to come and join with them in Lamentations, with Groans as sad, as when the Heart-Strings break : For, sure, a dismal Scene it is to view to see a Frame, which once was capable of various Pleasures, about to fall to nothing. Strange Insatiation ! Nature shudders at the Apprehension ; which, to me, in Reason, is a Proof of Immortality : And what is there in our Belief of Things we cannot understand, that clashes with our Reason ? Are there not

Cases

Cases here the very same ? Consider Light and Colours. Those beauteous Objects, that so much delight us ; talk of them to one, who has never seen : Begin at the Sun's Rising, and continue 'till Evening ; close the Scene, and he is ne'er the wiser : Yet we know *they are* Is not such a one to be condemn'd, who flights the Testimony of a dear Friend, that never would deceive him ? — But, in Pity to our good Host, whose Age, we know, cannot endure Fatigue, we must depart ; pleasing our selves with Hopes of To-Morrow's Converse. Therefore I'll add no more but a few Words, which somewhere I have read, varying a little the Expression, to make it *ap'opos*.

LADIES, *good Night : May Heav'n us Uses send,
Not to pick Bad from Bad, but by Bad mend.*





A POEM upon the NEW YEAR.

THE various Seasons in my Verse display'd,
 Shall shew bald Winter pleasing Summer
 [dress'd;

All the Charms that Nature yields,
 Sunny Hours, and gauzy Fields,
 Perfum'd Banks, and blooming Sprays,
 Bless'd with *Philomel's* sweet Lays,
 Ripen'd Fruit, and bending Corn,
 Lowing Herds, the merry Horn,
 Charms to warm the Winter's Cold,
 Glads the Heart of Young and Old,
 And makes e'en Cowards in the Chace grow bold.

Might I presume you wou'd approve the Lays,
 To Heights unus'd the aspiring Muse shou'd
 [rise,
 Smit with the Hope of Fame, and fir'd with Praise,
 The lowly Path I henceforth wou'd despise,
Scamander's Stream, *Ida's* Grove,
 Devoted both to Verse and Love,

D

Cyprian

Cyprian Queen, and *Paphian* Court,
 Where the Graces all resort.
Eurota's shady Banks and Stream,
 Laurels, Myrtles ever green,
 Silver Waters which do glide,
 Free from Winds, untou'd with Tides,
 Nor ought within its limpid Bosom hides.

All these shou'd be my Theme ; but blooming *May*
 Appears with all its various Beauties on its Side,
 And by it does the fabulous Tale deride.
 Refreshing Odours waft around,
 Flowers of Velvet paint the Ground,
 Breezes which they have but feign'd,
 Blessings which they never nam'd,
 All around us sweetly smile,
 Happy *Britain*, Queen of Isles ;
 Health on balmy Wings now flies
 I' th' Air, from Earth it does arise,
 Distill'd again from the indulgent Skies.

The Dog-Star's raging Heat we never mourn,
 Our happy Plains a temperate Climate cheers ;
 Pleasure smiles in all our Fields,
 Od'rous Breezes Comfort yield ;
 'Tho' we glassy Plains may know,
 Yet those Smarts of Frost and Snow,
 We're Strangers to, which some Lands undergo.

May

May He, whom wild tempestuous Seas obey,
 Who can with Ease curb the unruly Wind,
 The ponderous Mountains in a Balance weigh,
 And Snow and Hail and fiery Tempests bind :
 Source of all that Nature yields,
 Who adorns the Woods and Fields ;
 All the Sweets of Life bestow,
 All that Mortals bless below,
 Mind serene, and roley Health,
 That inestimable Wealth,
 Which can e'en Misfortune drown,
 Which does even Pleasure crown,
 And makes the Dregs of Life go smoothly
 [down.



*The F A B L E of the W O L F and
 C R A N E applied.*

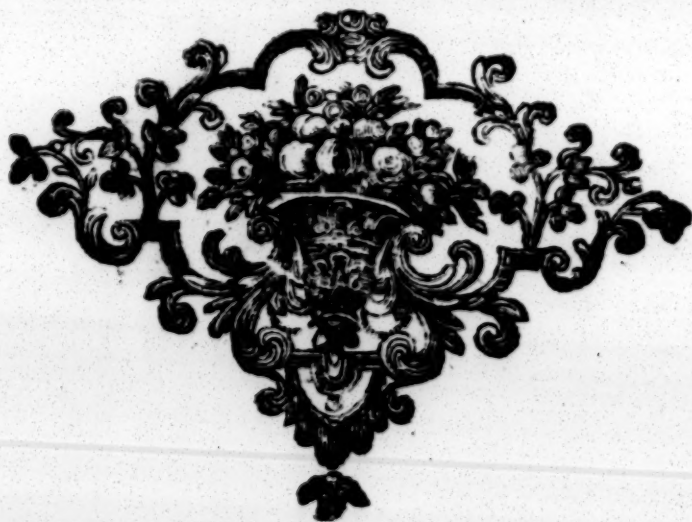
A Ravenous Wolf, so *ÆSOP* taught,
 In Quest of Prey was well nigh choak'd,
 When Chance directs a filly Crane
 To note his Howling, mark his Pain :
 In pious Terms he asks her Aid ;
 She yields, nor fears to be betray'd ;
 Streight thrusts her Neck between his Jaws,
 And thereby does her Life expose :

D 2

And

And tho' the Service did deserve
 Kind Treatment, did his Late preserve,
 Now he from Danger finds his Throat,
 The Obligation is forgot ;
 His Baleness with his Eate returns,
 Impatient he for Blood still burns ;
 Resolv'd the Appetite to feed,
 He makes his late Deliv'rer bleed ;
 With eager Gust devours her Blood,
 And o'er the mangled Carcase stood
 Unmov'd, with a malicious Grin ;
 Nor thought it Cruelty, or Sin.

The Fable well deserves your Heed,
 Lest you too, like the Crane shou'd bleed ;
 Forgotten Service plead in vain,
 To move his Pity, or his Shame :
 For after all your Drudg'ry past
 To gratify his cruel Taste,
 'Tis Ten to One but you deplore,
 What you've seen others do before.





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